

was 10.5 percent. In 1996 under Clinton, 8.4 percent. This year under Bush II, it is 7.7 percent. It is the lowest of all those Presidents at the time they were seeking Presidential reelection.

In conclusion, in 2003, the United States economy grew at a faster pace than the eight other largest advanced economies: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, and the United Kingdom. We are seeing steady increase in manufacturing and overall productivity. Retail sales increased strongly in March, rising 1.8 percent, the largest monthly gain in a year.

In conclusion, we are seeing the economic policies of the Bush administration and the resulting action by this Congress are enabling the economy to expand, offer new jobs, new opportunities, and increase the quality of life for all Americans. That is the good news for all of us.

STOP GENOCIDE IN SUDAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, everyone should read Mark Lacey's piece in today's New York Times titled, "In Sudan, Militiamen on Horses Uproot a Million." The article says, "The men on horses killed my parents," referring to the militia who have been armed by the Government of Sudan. "Then the planes came," referring to aerial bombardment by the Government of Sudan. Marc Lacey writes, "Human rights groups and international officials charge that the militia has been used as a tool of the government to pursue a radical policy resembling ethnic cleansing."

The militia knows no rules of war. "They ride camels and horses and use automatic weapons against those they come across. They ride into the villages en masse and shoot anyone in sight. As the militiamen torch and loot, the villagers grab what they can and run."

One young woman did not have time to get away. She was in bed when the Janjaweed moved in. Two men entered her hut, and raped her in front of her family. Raping, then branding the survivors is common practice in this forgotten land. Refugee after refugee tells the same story. Men on horseback, air raids, soldiers sweep into villages. As this crisis rages on, 1 million people are now internally displaced, and 100,000 refugees were forced into Chad. Unknown numbers have been murdered, and the world does little.

With the rainy season just weeks away, the window for getting humanitarian assistance is closing. The international community has 6 weeks left. USAID has warned that by fall, the mortality rate will be 5 times the threshold for a major catastrophic event.

Why is the aid not getting there? The Government of Sudan continues to

stall in the issuing visas for aid workers and is preventing full humanitarian access to the region. The international community has just 6 weeks to act on their behalf.

Where are the voices of outrage? Remember Rwanda 10 years ago? Remember all of the celebrations with regard to remember Rwanda and never let it happen again. Where are the voices? Is the international community going to fail the people of Darfur, Sudan? What will the world tell those who survive? Why is the United Nations and the international community not doing more?

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the Bush administration and the United States for taking the lead on this issue. Ambassador Richard Williamson gave a moving presentation in Geneva at the 60th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights 2 weeks ago. He laid out the facts that show that ethnic cleansing is occurring in Sudan, and what did the United Nations Commission on Human Rights do, the lone body responsible? Zero, zip. Other than the United States, very few people would even speak out on this issue.

The world must do more. We must speak out. I call on this Congress to speak out. Members who care about human rights should do all they can to help the people of Darfur in Sudan. This week the House Committee on International Relations will mark up H. Con. Res. 403, condemning the Government of Sudan for their complicity for what is happening in Darfur, and calling the international community to do the same, and urging immediate humanitarian access to the region.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, The New York Times writes about rape, pillaging, and murder on its front page. We cannot say we did not know it is happening. If we fail to act, in another 10 years Darfur will be today's Rwanda and some Member of Congress will be standing here on the floor asking those in the body at that time to remember the genocide that took place in Darfur. Is that what this world wants?

IN SUDAN, MILITIAMEN ON HORSES UPROOT A MILLION

(By Marc Lacey)

NYALA, SUDAN, May 2.—Hawa Muhammad, 15, lost just about everything when the men on horseback came. They took her family's horses, donkeys and small herd of goats and sheep. They took her cooking pots and her clothing. They took her mother and her father, too.

"The men on horses killed my parents," she said, referring to the Janjaweed, loose bands of Arab fighters. "Then the planes came."

Now it is she to whom her six younger sisters turn when their bellies rumble. She recounted her tale as if in a trance.

Hawa left her village on the run and settled with thousands of others at the camp in Kalma, outside Nyala, part of a tide of a million people that the United Nations and others say has been displaced in this vast region of western Sudan. The government in Khartoum has closed the region to outsiders for much of the last year.

Hawa's account of how the attack unfolded is the same as those heard in camp after camp across Darfur, as well as the settlements across the border in the desert of eastern Chad, where the United Nations estimates another 100,000 villagers have streamed.

Many were driven away by the Janjaweed, a few thousand uniformed militia men who have worked with government soldiers and aerial bombardments to purge villages of their darker-skinned black African inhabitants.

The government denies any relationship to the Janjaweed, but ousted villagers say the links are strong, and their accounts are backed by numerous aid workers and outside experts.

Human rights groups and international officials charge that the Janjaweed have been used as a tool of the government to pursue a radical policy resembling ethnic cleansing.

The conflict has pitted Arab nomads and herders against settled black African farmers. The tensions have been worsened by droughts in the north and the slow creep of the desert southward.

For 20 years rebels in southern Sudan have sought to topple the Arab-dominated government in the north. Two million people died in that larger conflict, and a peace agreement is considered near.

But since early 2003 two rebel groups in Darfur, the Sudan Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement, initiated a separate rebellion, complaining that the region's people, especially the black Africans, were being marginalized.

Sudan's decades-old civil war was much about religion—the north is mostly Muslim, the south animist and Christian. Darfur's conflict is over ethnicity and resources; it pits Muslim against Muslim.

The rebels here scored some early victories, and the government responded with a fury, angering countries that thought it was finally taking the country toward peace after decades of civil war.

The army has used helicopter gunships and old Russian-made Antonov plane, loaded with bombs. But the Arab-African rivalry has long festered here, and the most ruthless weapon has been the mounted Janjaweed fighters, who know no rules of war.

The Janjaweed ride camels and horses and use automatic weapons against those they come across. They ride into villages en masse and shoot anyone in sight. As the militiamen torch and loot, the villagers grab what they can and run.

An empty village is an eerie place. There are no babies crying, no goats bleating, no women pounding grain into mush. The only sound comes from the wind as it whips over the huts that used to house families but now lie toppled and torched.

Today there are many such villages in the vast Darfur region. Eleven ghost villages line the main road just northwest of here. Each stands frozen, just as it was when it was overrun.

Some were cleared months ago. Others were attacked as recently as last week. In each it is clear that life came to a sudden halt. Beds are overturned, and pots lie on their sides. In front of one hut is a child's sandal, but no child anywhere.

Fatima Ishag Sulieman, 25, did not have time to get away. She was in bed when the Janjaweed moved in. Two men entered her hut. They hit her, then they raped her in front of her family.

"I screamed, and they ran away," she said in Arabic.

Ms. Sulieman and others uprooted from their homes end up in camps, some of them organized settlements and others squalid outposts. She now lives under a tree at a secondary school in Kas, in southern Darfur. All

around the schoolyard are other villagers, most of them women and children. Many of them, she says, experienced what she did.

Others suffer in different ways.

Adam Hassan, a weathered man in an equally weathered robe, described a dual attack. First it was Arab men on horseback, he said, who swooped down on his village, outside Kaliek. Then, he said, soldiers moved in.

In Mr. Hassan's case it was his two sons, ages 7 and 10, who were killed.

Mr. Hassan now stays with his wife and two surviving daughters at the Kas schoolyard. He wants desperately to return to his land and pick up again where he left off.

Like so many of the uprooted villagers, Mr. Hassan is a farmer. He relies on the heavy rains that come in June and add some life to the dusty earth. His sorghum and ground nuts keep his family alive.

But he and hundreds of thousands of other farmers in Darfur will miss this year's planting season. It is too unsafe for them to farm. That reality has aid agencies gearing up for what will be more and more hunger in the days ahead.

"I may have to stay here forever," he said at his campsite, looking glum. "There are too many Janjaweed."

The United Nations, which conducted its own tour of Darfur last week, said the crisis in western Sudan would last another 18 months—if the government managed to disarm the men on horseback soon.

But it remains to be seen whether the lawlessness will be tamed. On one recent day, men on camelback still lurked on the outskirts of an empty village outside Kas. They took off when visitors arrived.

Farther down a dirt track, a man on the back of a donkey approached another destroyed village, an assault weapon balanced on his lap.

His name was Ismael Abbakar, and he said he knew how the village had been emptied—he took, part, in fact—although he claimed to be protecting the villagers, not driving them away.

Last year, when the chaos in Darfur began spinning out of control, he was raising cattle for a living. Now, though, he is a government soldier who patrols alone with his government-issued weapon. He pulled out an identification to prove his affiliation.

In Darfur the distinction between soldier and outlaw has grown murky.

Ahmed Angabo Ahmed, the commissioner of the Kas region, acknowledged enlisting some armed robbers in the police and army to hunt down the rebels. He said his new recruits were on the side of the law now and were not Janjaweed.

"The Janjaweed are outlaws," he said.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. TERRY) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, Enlightenment for the world, guide this Nation by Your wisdom. Lift up the prize of this Nation, our children, and our young people. Create for them a great future by providing them with good teachers.

As Members of Congress call to mind the many teachers You have given them through the years, make us all grateful for the women and men who have shaped our ways of thinking and opened for us avenues of learning and discovery.

The Scriptures tell us, "The learned will shine like the brilliance of the firmament and those who train others in the ways of justice will sparkle like the stars for all eternity."

Bless the teachers of these United States, and reward them for their noble work, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MOORE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

PEER-TO-PEER SOFTWARE ENDANGERS OUR CHILDREN

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, peer-to-peer file-sharing software poses a danger to our children. At any given time, 22 million children are online sharing files on peer-to-peer networks. They usually trade music and photos. But another group of peer-to-peer users has a different agenda. Most parents do not know about it. Most kids do not have a clue.

Pornographers and child predators use these networks to expose young children to the crudest forms of pornography imaginable, much of it child porn, always disguised using innocent-sounding terms. Often, these predators attempt to arrange meetings with young people through this software. These contacts pose a significant risk to the safety of our children when they use the computer.

This week, the Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection will take up this issue. Among the solutions to be discussed is my bill, H.R. 2885, the Protecting Children

From Peer-to-Peer Pornography Act. The bill addresses the cyberdangers of file-sharing programs, like KaZaA.

Congress must act to protect children from this threat. If left unchecked, peer-to-peer networks will become the worst base of operations which child molesters, pornographers, and predators use to attack our kids in our homes online.

SAUDI ARABIAN CROWN PRINCE BLAMING ZIONISM FOR TERRORIST ATTACKS BY SAUDIS

(Mr. LANTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah is blaming Zionism for recent terrorist attacks by Saudi groups in their own country. Zionism, the Crown Prince says, plays on the minds of terrorists and corrupts Saudi youth.

What an outrage. What blatant hypocrisy.

Mr. Speaker, 2½ years after the September 11 attacks, Saudi Arabia still cannot look in the mirror and face the truth. Its own extremist ideology is corroding Saudi society and exporting the damage to countless others. How ironic that Abdullah accuses Zionism, whatever he intends that word to mean, while the Saudi kingdom inculcates its young with hatred of Christians, Jews, and Western Civilization.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Prince Abdullah to retract his sickening and absurd statements, and I call on him to apologize. His real enemy is homegrown bigotry, which can only be battled by dragging Saudi Arabia into the 21st century.

CONGRESS SHOULD PASS PERMANENT AMT TAX RELIEF

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week we will vote on H.R. 4227, the Middle-Class Alternative Minimum Tax Relief Act of 2004. We need to pass this important bill, sponsored by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS), to avoid 11 million taxpayers being hit with an average tax increase of \$1,520.

The AMT Tax Relief Act will ensure that this bipartisan tax relief will continue through 2005. As our economy continues its strong recovery, we must make sure that middle-income families keep more of their own money.

Without the AMT Tax Relief Act, millions of middle-income families will face a tax increase next year by being forced into paying the alternative minimum tax. Married couples will see their AMT exemption drop from \$58,000 to \$45,000. Single individuals will see their AMT exemption drop from \$40,250 to \$33,750.